



From the Office of Domestic Programs

Global Insights

MASTER'S INTERNATIONAL NEWS
SUMMER 2006

Growing Up in Ghana

By Taylor McLean

I can hardly believe it's been one year since I began the Master's International program, left everything I knew and loved, and shipped off to [Ghana](#), West Africa, to serve in the Peace Corps.

In Ghana time takes on a whole new meaning...and sometimes it means nothing at all. I'm amazed at how the days seem to lazily flow into one another, often excruciatingly slowly for my frenzied American sensibilities, yet the months disappear in the blink of an eye. It's only when I stop and take the time to look back on my time here that I realize just how far I've come.

After three months of pre-service training, I was placed in Tano-Odumase, a small farming village in the Ashanti region. For the first few months of my assignment with the Fisheries Directorate in Ghana's [Ministry of Food and Agriculture](#), I was completely lost. I felt like a tropical fish, taken out of my aquarium and dropped unceremoniously into a large lake full of big, intimidating catfish.

Ghanaian hospitality is world-renowned, and rightly so. Since the moment I set foot on Ghanaian soil, I have felt warmly welcomed, respected, and even pampered. Still, to the fish farmer associations with which I work (or "Men's Clubs," as a fellow fisheries Volunteer and I nicknamed them) I was what is referred to here as a "small girl."

I didn't want to be indulged. I wanted to be respected as a colleague, as a resource, and as a graduate student. Yet the question that loomed over me was: How does a young girl who doesn't speak the local language, doesn't wash her own clothes, and doesn't even eat fish possibly contribute to the development of Ghana's freshwater fisheries?

The answers came to me slowly, with a lot of lessons about life and culture mixed in. I have found amazing people to work with—farmers, ministry staff, university professors and students—all driven by a true belief in their work and love for their country. I have learned that



Taylor McLean (right) and a friend discuss his fish pond.

although we often tend to look to outside sources, Ghana holds all the answers within its borders.

Fish is an important and cheap source of protein in this country, yet the domestic demand has been largely unmet. Helping farmers and

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Jordan Kimball (in blue hat) at a meeting with FAO Country Representative Ari Toubou Ibrahim, Associate Peace Corps Director Abdoulaye Diallo, Country Director Steve Peterson, and collaborating FAO personnel.

Pilot Project With a Future

Master's International student Jordan Kimball recently completed his third year as a Volunteer in [Guinea](#), working with the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#) on a pilot project to expand agroforestry techniques in the Basse Côte region. This project marks the beginning of what Peace Corps/Guinea hopes will be a long and fruitful collaboration between the Peace Corps and FAO in Guinea. At a final meeting with FAO, Jordan gave a presentation in which he shared the project's accomplishments along with information about the model farm he helped establish during his third year of service. Jordan has since returned to the U.S. where he is finishing his master's degree in [natural resource management](#) at the [University of Minnesota](#).



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Michigan Technological University Launches Fourth MI Program

Countries striving for economic growth and equitable development know that a strong education system that reaches all citizens is the foundation of a good future.

Improving quality of life and achieving sustainable development places a high demand for scientific and technological literacy on all citizens.

The new Master's International program in [science education](#) at [Michigan Technological University](#) (MTU) is geared toward students with undergraduate degrees in the physical sciences. Students

will spend a year on campus taking courses in science and education, serve two years in the Peace Corps, then return to MTU to finish a written project. When they are done, they will have earned a master's degree and be close to completing a secondary teacher certification.

"It will be great for people who will ultimately pursue careers in science education, research, or industry," says [chemistry department](#) chair Sarah Green, who developed the program along with Brad Baltensperger, chair of the [education department](#). "This lets them try something different while helping to meet the global need for science educators."

Students in this program will also be able to interact on campus with

those in MTU's other MI programs, in [natural hazards](#), [civil engineering](#), [environmental engineering](#), and [forestry](#). "These programs attract a very enthusiastic, positive group of

students," says Green. "Some were MTU undergrads, but the rest of the Volunteers are from all around the country. One of the reasons we decided to go ahead with this new program is that the students in our other Peace Corps programs are so great."

Baltensperger agrees. "These are all terrific programs. What I'm looking

forward to is the cross-fertilization between them."

If the new program's alumni decide to pursue careers as science teachers, opportunities abound both overseas and here in the U.S. Statistics show that nearly a quarter of science classes in Texas middle and high schools are taught by teachers without proper science credentials and California faces a critical shortfall of highly qualified math and science teachers in the state's secondary school classrooms. As science education takes on increased urgency in the United States, experienced teachers with strong communication skills will be in ever greater demand.

"These programs attract a very enthusiastic, positive group of students...One of the reasons we decided to go ahead with this new program is that the students in our other Peace Corps programs are so great."

Amesquita Joins MI Staff as Program Assistant

My name is Chris Amesquita. I am a native of Dumfries, Virginia, and a graduate of the [College of William & Mary](#), where I earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and international business in 2005.

While in high school I volunteered at ACTS (Action in the Community Through Service), a Dumfries organization that promotes community-based service activities. In 1997, I created a database for the organization that highlighted notable volunteers and permitted ACTS to

receive a large program grant from the state.

I have witnessed the overwhelmingly positive effects service has on a community. I am proud to join MI in supporting Peace Corps Volunteers and graduate students in pursuing their goals.



The Adventure Continues Post-Peace Corps

By Christian Sanders

Living abroad is one of those things you know will have a profound effect on the rest of your life. But it would take coming back home and leaving behind all those I had lived and worked with in [Guatemala](#) for real understanding to set in.

I served in the southeastern part of the country in a *pueblo* of about 5,000 people near the Honduran border. Like most towns in Central America, it was a rather concentrated urban area bordered by small villages in the surrounding mountains. More than 35,000 indigenous Maya lived in the mountain villages around my town. It was among the Maya that I would learn to speak Spanish, talk about the coming harvest, struggle to implement projects, and discover the true meaning of patience.

Returning home in July 2004, I was faced with the daunting task of completing a project paper that would, in essence, bridge the work I pursued in Guatemala with the concepts I had learned as a student at [Cornell](#) more than two years earlier. It might not seem like a

monumental task, but having been “scholarly inactive” for such a long period of time, I wasn’t quite sure how I was going to wrap my arms around such a long and intense period of time, define a topic from amongst the many floating around in



Christian Sanders enjoying life in Australia.

my head, and complete a master’s degree-worthy paper.

With the luxury of hindsight, I believe it was one of the best things I could have done for myself. Critically

analyzing that portion of my life was exactly what I should have done after such a thought-provoking and perspective-changing experience. In May 2005, almost a year after returning home, I graduated from Cornell and once again set my sights on an unknown and rather undefined challenge.

Since September of 2005, I’ve been living in Sydney, Australia. I came on a four-month work visa with the vague plan of getting work, saving money, then traveling for an additional three months on a tourist visa. After about three weeks of searching, calling up numerous engineering firms, and checking online job-search engines daily, I managed to find a perfect beginning job. A small engineering consultancy was looking to fill a permanent position. I interviewed—and was surprised to hear a day later that they wanted to hire me! Since then, I’ve been working on a diverse array of projects that all pertain in some way to potable water treatment.

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Gardening as Meditation

By Kate Reinsma

Clearing weeds from the hovel, a blistered hand on the handle of a shovel, I’ve been digging too deep, I always do...Gotta get out of bed...Learn how to use my hands, not just my head....Gotta tend the earth if you want a rose...My life is part of the global life....When I’d think a little girl in the world can’t do anything....A distant nation my community...If I have a care in the world I have a gift to bring.

—from *Hammer and a Nail*, ©1990
[Indigo Girls](#)

I can’t think of words to better describe this picture and all of my experiences since arriving in [Cameroon](#) last October. The woman next to me is my dear friend, Eunice. I work with her doing HIV/AIDS prevention education at the Catholic girl’s high school.

The head scarf and socks I am wearing belong to Eunice. She insisted that I wear the wool socks to protect my legs from the dust. We

used the hoes in our hands to till the earth and form the ridges. For three days we worked in my garden. The first day she used a machete to cut down all of the weeds. She wouldn’t let me do anything, just told me to watch. The second day we formed two of the four ridges that you see behind us. The next day we finished the other two.

Since women do pretty much all of the farming, and start when they are about eight, my small garden was no problem for her. If she didn’t have to take time to teach me, she could have tilled my plot in one morning.

I can’t wait to plant groundnuts, beans, squash, and sweet potatoes next month. Directly behind us are a papaya tree and a banana tree. Didn’t have to plant those!

As a Master’s International student I came here to teach people about nutrition and health, but in the process I have learned about the complexities of life—solidarity, companionship, and a new meaning of time.



Kate (left) and Eunice in Kate’s new vegetable garden.

Kate Reinsma is a Master’s International student in [Colorado State University’s Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition](#). She began her service in Cameroon in October 2005.

Peace Corps/Mauritania Hosts First West Africa Regional MI Workshop

By Dr. Kurt Paterson

The answer? Better, earlier communication among posts, universities, and Volunteers. The question? How can the Master's International program operate more effectively?

Participants at the inaugural West Africa Regional MI Workshop met for two days last December 13-14 in Nouakchott, on Mauritania's Atlantic coast. Hosted by Peace Corps/Mauritania, the workshop provided an opportunity for Master's International Volunteers from [Chad](#), [Mali](#), and [Mauritania](#) to brainstorm and share ideas with [Dr. Kurt Paterson](#) from the [Michigan Technological University \(MTU\) environmental engineering MI program](#), and Peace Corps/Mauritania's country director, assistant Peace Corps directors, and training staff.

Specific recommendations referenced the four major players of MI: Peace Corps posts, Peace Corps headquarters, host universities, and Volunteers. The last part of the workshop focused on creating a timeline for the MI Volunteer [lower right].

MTU would like to thank Peace Corps/Mauritania and Peace Corps/Mali for their strong support of this workshop. The university looks forward to future conferences on how to further improve this excellent program.

Commonly Used Acronyms

APCD	Assistant Peace Corps Director
CD	Country Director
COS	Close of Service
PC	Peace Corps
PC HQ	Peace Corps Headquarters
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
MI	Master's International
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization



Workshop attendees take a beach break. From left to right: Brock Emerson, Ben Burgen, Jennifer McConville, Milagros Jean Charles, Meghan Housewright, Dzifa Awunyo-Akaba, and Lisa Anderson. (not pictured: Stephanie Farrell, Alicia Wittmer, Dr. Kurt Paterson)

MI Volunteer Timeline

Prior to Placement:

- Student accepted into university and Peace Corps
- MI coordinator explains program objectives to student
- MI coordinator explains program/development realities to student
- Review past projects and Peace Corps experiences
- Write draft of MI personal and professional goals

Placement:

- Accept placement—notify advisor
- Contact PC HQ for CD contact information
- Contact CD for sector goals and program plan
- Consider contacting MI students currently serving in country
- Research country and existing similar projects
- Revise personal/and professional goals to be given to post personnel

Pre-service Training:

- Give CD and APCD university documents, personal statement, and MI letter
- Familiarize yourself with new surroundings
- Get to know your APCD
- Notify advisor once site is announced
- Swear in

Peace Corps Service:

Quarter 1:

- Acclimate to your new surroundings

Quarter 2:

- Gather initial research/project ideas/impressions/challenges

Quarter 3:

- Refine project ideas and how they relate to your service

Quarter 4:

- Draft research/project plan
- Review plan with advisor

Quarter 5:

- Finalize research/project plan
- Make specific calendar/checklist for final nine months

Quarter 6:

- Review preliminary findings
- Reevaluate goals and timeline

Quarter 7:

- Develop report outline
- Present research to APCD and counterparts

Quarter 8:

- Develop detailed outline, rough draft of report, and list of work to be completed upon return
- COS

Post-service:

- Share PC knowledge, experiences, assessment with university and Washington MI staff
- Send report to CD

Post-Peace Corps

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I feel about as far away from Guatemala as I possibly could be—skyscrapers, urban train rides to work, endless varieties of ethnic foods. Despite this change in scenery and hemisphere, I'm still involved in Guatemala, albeit vicariously. I still have friends working there, I stay in touch and send money for school fees to a few kids who are doing some amazing things, and I've maintained contact with a woman making beautiful hand-woven bags that I help her to sell in the United States. In fact, I recently learned that she has been approached by a couple of different groups interested in selling her bags. This made me ecstatic; I can't describe how good it was to hear such news! (If you'd sat in her palm-thatched hut, passed time with her parents and children, and known the amount of insecurity in her life, you'd easily understand why it left such a big smile on my face.)

All in all, it's been an amazing four years. To think I could just as easily ended up in some job after graduating with my bachelor's degree, eschewing experience for stability and security. What a waste that would have been—of me and for me. I can't imagine what lies in wait around the next corner.

Peruvian President Attributes Success to Impact of Peace Corps



Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo (standing) and Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez

President Alejandro Toledo of [Peru](#) kicked off the Peace Corps 45th Anniversary Speakers Series on March 10, attributing the head start he was given in life to the Peace Corps Volunteers who taught him English in 1965.

"A large portion of the path that I took—through my education, leaving the shantytown in Chimbote—Peace Corps had a lot to do with the path that I took. You people are responsible for this president!" exclaimed President Toledo, acknowledging that his transition from a poor, rural boy in Peru to a well-educated president of a country might not have been possible were it not for the Peace Corps.

President Toledo spoke of the Peace Corps' unique ability to break down barriers and change the hearts and minds of so many people throughout the world. He noted that

solidarity and cooperation are the keys to success, and emphasized that Peace Corps Volunteers are valued because "they are not imposing [on a host country]. They are helping and learning."

Addressing an audience of government officials, returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff, Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez presented President Toledo with a Norman Rockwell lithograph of Peace Corps Volunteers. In return, President Toledo presented Director Vasquez with a biography detailing his rise to the presidency and his years in office, noting that Peace Corps has been a part of the story.

One of 16 children, President Toledo was born and raised in the port village of Chimbote. His father was a bricklayer and his mother sold fish at markets, while he worked as a shoeshine boy. At age 16, with the help of Peace Corps Volunteers, President Toledo enrolled at the [University of San Francisco](#) on a one-year scholarship. He completed his bachelor's degree in economics by obtaining a partial soccer scholarship and working part-time pumping gas. He completed his Ph.D. in economics and education at [Stanford University's](#) Graduate School of Education. Before being elected president, he worked as a consultant for various international organizations, including the [United Nations](#) and the [Inter-American Development Bank](#).

Where Are They Now?

Ruth Grubestic, Nepal (1991-93)

A transplanted Texan, Ruth was born in Germany and grew up in Illinois, but has spent most of her academic and professional life in the Houston area. Armed with a bachelor's degree from [Bradley University](#) in Illinois and a master's degree from the former MI program at [Texas Woman's University](#), Ruth earned her Ph.D. in public health from the [University of Texas](#). She is now an assistant professor of nursing at Texas Woman's University.

Ruth's Peace Corps service as a Volunteer and as a training technical coordinator in Nepal from 1991 to

1994 continues to impact her life. One of her primary research areas is international health issues. She has presented papers based on research conducted in Nepal, spoken at conferences about international nursing, accompanied student exchange groups to Mexico, and is a member of Women Against Global Trafficking.

As an active member of the [Gulf Coast Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers](#), Ruth has coordinated special events like the Last Friday Reconnect, Peace on Earth Day, and Peace Corps



Ruth and a friend at Christmas.

Partnership fundraisers. She has served as the chapter's archivist, and is currently its president.

New Peace Corps Anthology Now on Sale

As part of its 45th anniversary, the Peace Corps has released a compilation of Volunteer stories to the general public. *A Life Inspired: Tales of Peace Corps Service* is a tapestry of stories from Peace Corps Volunteers from Bolivia to Zambia and includes a foreword by Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez. Two of the stories are by Master's International alumni.

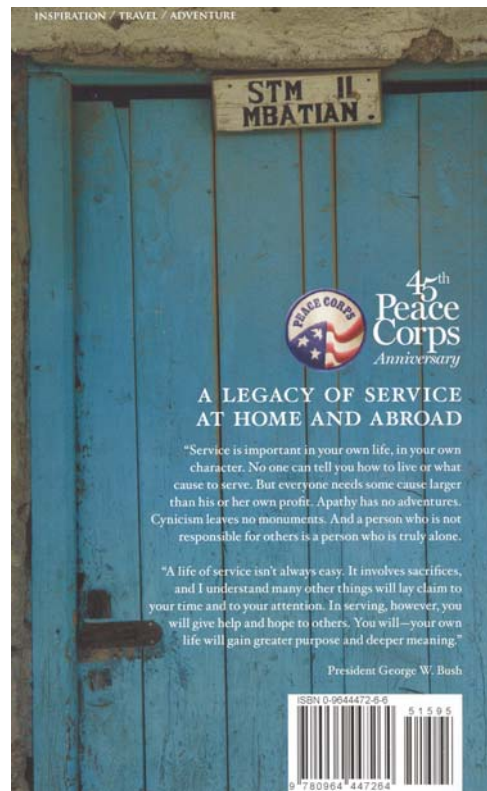
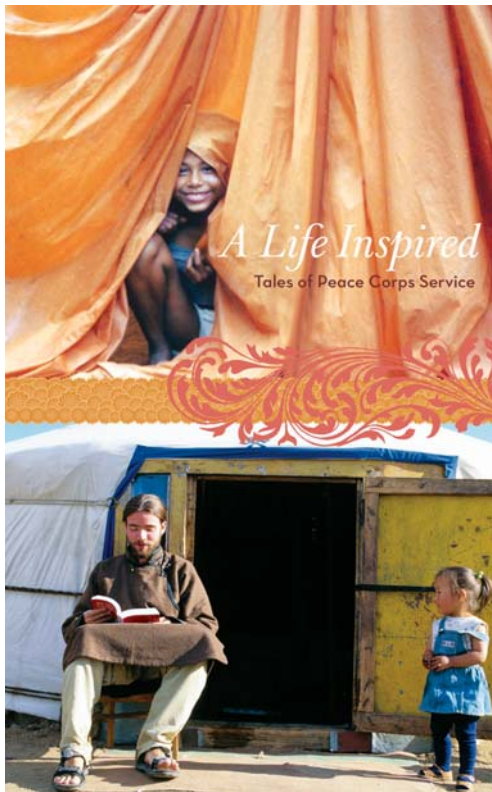
"Since the inception of the Peace Corps, more than 182,000 Americans have embraced the cultures of 138 host countries, building bonds of friendship and bridges of understanding. Now, with the public release of this book, their inspirational journeys can be shared with a much wider audience," said Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez.

"The Faces of an Acacia Tree" was written by Karin Vermilye, a forestry Volunteer in [Cameroon](#) from 2000 to 2002. Karin graduated from the MI program at the [University of Montana](#). Her degree in [resource](#)

[conservation](#) led her to the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) in Washington, D.C., where she is a project administrator for the [Save the Tiger Fund](#). To see photos of the people and places mentioned in Karin's story go to www.lakeshoreimages.com/cameroon.html.

John Sheffy, author of "Soybean Transformations," served in [Togo](#) from 2002 to 2004. He also graduated from the University of Montana's MI program, though with a degree in [international resource management](#). John is now the outreach program manager for sustainable agriculture and forestry in the [Global Environmental Management education center](#) at the [University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point](#).

A Life Inspired can be purchased for \$15.95 in bookstores or on the Government Printing Office's website at bookstore.gpo.gov. It can also be borrowed from your local library or found at local recruitment events.



Telling Stories to Celebrate Service

More than 140 people, including many returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) and potential Volunteers, gathered on Wednesday, March 1, at the [University of Washington](#) (UW) to celebrate Peace Corps Week and the agency's 45th anniversary.

Organized by Jeff Carter (Niger 1986-89), UW's Master's International program coordinator, and the [Seattle Regional Recruitment Office](#), the celebration coincided with UW's annual MI recruiting event. UW has three MI programs—in [international nongovernmental organization \(NGO\) development](#), [international forestry](#), and [international health](#).

No matter where a Volunteer served or when, every RPCV has a story to tell. Sarah Oltmans ([South Africa](#) 2003-05) described her work on HIV/AIDS education and domestic violence issues with small NGOs, and how the MI program helped her prepare for the challenges of volunteer service.

Tim Forbes ([Kyrgyz Republic](#) 2003-05) told of his experience working with a civic education NGO to set up an internet center while his host country was undergoing civil unrest.

Bryana Britts ([Thailand](#) 2003-05) explained the ups and downs of Peace Corps life, and how the skills she learned from the MI program helped her organize a successful regional daycare teacher training.

Finally, keynote speaker Daniel Chang ([Guatemala](#) 1990-92) detailed how his experiences as an MI Volunteer helped launch his career in public health. Today, he works for the [Program for Appropriate Technology in Health \(PATH\)](#), an international, nonprofit organization that creates sustainable, culturally relevant solutions, enabling communities worldwide to break longstanding cycles of poor health.

The Peace Corps has reached a 30-year high in the number of Volunteers in the field. The official count includes 7,810 Volunteers serving in 75 countries. Ninety-six percent of Volunteers have at least a bachelor's degree, with 13 percent having a master's degree or higher.

University of Alaska Fairbanks MI Program Coordinator Receives Kennedy Service Award

Tony Gasbarro, MI program coordinator at the [University of Alaska Fairbanks](#) (UAF), received one of the Peace Corps' inaugural John F. Kennedy Service Awards during a special anniversary event at the [Kennedy presidential library](#) in Boston on March 4. A Volunteer in the [Dominican Republic](#) from 1962 to 1964 and in [El Salvador](#) from 1996 to 1998, Tony was recognized for continued domestic and international service in his community while assisting with Peace Corps-sponsored programs.

Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez presented the awards to six individuals who demonstrated exemplary service and leadership in fulfilling the agency's mission. Established in honor of 45 years of Peace Corps service to the global community, the awards will be given every five years to six notable individuals: two current Volunteers, two returned Volunteers, and two Peace Corps staff members who help further the agency's goals and mission through their commitment to world peace and friendship.

Upon his return from El Salvador, Tony looked for ways to continue helping Salvadorans and to promote cross-cultural understanding. He has returned to El Salvador twice each year since 1998 as a board member of [Project Salvador](#), a Denver-based non-profit organization involved in community development in El Salvador. Tony has raised tens of thousands of dollars to provide scholarships for nearly 200 Salvadoran youth so they can attend



Tony Gasbarro (right), with Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez, displays his John F. Kennedy Service Award.

high school and college. He recently helped start a vision-screening program for children with the help of an Alaska ophthalmologist, a U.S. [Lions Club](#), and a Salvadoran Lions Club.

"My experiences in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador brought me face-to-face with poverty. In carrying out my assignments I became a much more compassionate person through daily interactions with the people of my village," Tony says. "A vocation, according to the Reverend Frederick Buechner is 'the place where your deep gladness meets the world's

deep need'. Thanks to the Peace Corps I have found my vocation."

With Tony's help, UAF became part of the MI program in 2004. He subsequently volunteered to be the program's campus coordinator. A tireless promoter of Peace Corps service, Tony was one of the founding members of the [Northern Alaska Peace Corps Friends](#) group. He has given more than 300 presentations about the Peace Corps to students at all levels and to service groups and professional organizations. Currently, he co-teaches a graduate seminar in international development at UAF.

Ghana

Continued from page 1

organizations realize the role they can play and directing them toward the resources they need—these are my contributions.

We have organized aquaculture trainings with agriculture extension agents in numerous districts, and participated in farmer field days, watching happily as farmers proudly show the work they have done. It has been inspiring to see the excitement grow in the eyes of new farmers as they realize what they can accomplish.

Now I wash my own clothes and can almost get all the stains out. I go

on extension visits to farms so far out in the bush, I would have never have been able to find them six months ago. The farmers greet me as an equal, and we walk around the ponds discussing problems and ideas in Twi. On the way back, I am overwhelmed with bunches of banana, fresh papaya, mango, and guava—gifts of thanks. And when the light of the day starts to wane, and the red African sun is sinking in the sky, we return to the farmhouse and sit, as friends, sharing a bowl of delicious *fufuo* and fish stew.

MI Thesis Anthology Coming Soon

Master's International staff at Peace Corps headquarters have collected a broad sample of MI student theses written between 2000 and 2005.

For many MI students, the final requirement before graduation is completing a capstone project, which is often a written thesis. Based on research conducted during the students' Peace Corps service, the theses may prove valuable to future Volunteers.

The anthology will soon be available on CD-ROM through MI program coordinators at partner universities.

From the MI Program Director

I often wonder: Does time go faster when you're in school, when you're a Peace Corps Volunteer, or when you're working? I'm sure those of you getting ready to go overseas are anxious to board that airplane, and those of you currently serving are wondering how you will complete all of your projects before your service comes to an end. Thank goodness, we have our family, friends, and colleagues to help us stay focused. And regardless of where you are in the Peace Corps pipeline—whether as a nominee, invitee, Volunteer, or returned Volunteer, Peace Corps staff work to support you in your quest to impact peoples' lives in positive ways.

As you may know, the Peace Corps will soon be opening a new post, the first in two years. In 2007, Volunteers will be sent to the Kingdom of Cambodia. As Peace Corps celebrates 45 years of service

at home and abroad, it's inspiring to know that we have a new opportunity to offer others a hopeful tomorrow.

Since our last newsletter, Master's International has experienced several exciting changes. Jahleezah Eskew joined our staff as the new assistant director, adding fresh ideas and support to all the MI campuses and serving as yet another resource for MI students and Volunteers. We also welcomed Chris Amesquita as our new program assistant. Many of you have also had the pleasure of working with our placement assistant, Echo Domingues. Echo attempts to find assignments that closely correspond with students' areas of study while meeting Peace Corps' need to fill requests for Volunteers with scarce skills. I hope you will call on any of us with any questions or needs you may have.

Sylvia Alejandre

Hotline Goes Online

For nearly 30 years recently returned Volunteers have found the *Hotline* newsletter in their mailboxes. As of the March 15 edition, *Hotline* is now delivered online via subscribers' e-mail inboxes.

This new e-newsletter format enables the Office of Domestic Programs's Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) staff to leverage the latest technologies to more efficiently deliver critical content such as job announcements, insightful transition articles, and news of upcoming events.

If you have been receiving the paper edition of *Hotline* and would like to receive the new electronic edition, please send an email to HOTLINEemail@peacecorps.gov with "Subscribe" in the subject line and include:

1. Full name (including middle initial)
2. Name used during service, if different
3. Country of service
4. COS month and year
5. Preference for HTML or Text version

Note: please do NOT use the *Hotline* email address for any other correspondence. To update your mailing address or other contact information, visit www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv/info.

Remember to explore the returned Volunteer section on the Peace Corps website (www.peacecorps.gov/RPCV) where you'll find information about career and transition assistance, post-service benefits, financial issues, and noncompetitive eligibility for federal employment, as well as answers to frequently asked questions. The website also offers ways to build upon your Peace Corps experience through third-goal activities. Whether it's through the *Hotline* e-newsletter, the Peace Corps website, or the staff at the Office of Domestic Programs, you'll find information about the many ways in which the Peace Corps is dedicated to helping you make a smooth transition back to life in the States.

MI Welcomes New Assistant Director



Hello, my name is Jahleezah Eskew and I am an "RPCE" (returned Peace Corps employee). From 1991 to 1997, I worked in the Africa region's Office of Programming and Training. Now I've returned as the new assistant director for the Master's International program in the Office of Domestic Programs.

I am a graduate of the [University of California, Berkeley](#) in Afro-American Studies and have

completed two years of graduate work in African Studies at [Howard University](#) in Washington, D.C. I also worked as a student affairs officer for 15 years on the Berkeley campus.

The many years I served on the Berkeley campus provided me with valuable insight into the academic environment from an administrator's perspective and from an academic advisor's perspective serving many talented graduate students in various disciplines. This background will be an asset in working with our university partners and graduate students/ Volunteers in the MI program.

My previous experience with the Peace Corps gave me with a better understanding of the development issues facing our counterparts in other countries. That experience was enriching, both professionally and personally. I will always appreciate the early Peace Corps slogan, "The toughest job you'll ever love!" It is this mindset that I bring to MI and I look forward to continuing the adventure with all of you.